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Vol. 1, No.1 Fall 1993

# User Friendly

A Newsletter for *AAT* Users

*Art & Architecture Thesaurus*

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# This Is It! – The Complete *AAT*

In this inaugural issue of ***User Friendly*** the most important news is the forthcoming publication of the ***AAT, Second Edition***, by Oxford University Press in February 1994. The five-volume print edition of the thesaurus will contain 33 hierarchies and the accompanying alphabetical index. ***The Art and Architecture Thesaurus: Authority Reference Tool***®, *Version 2.0*, will be published at the same time, as will two other electronic editions: one in the full USMARC authority format, and another in a fielded ASCII format extracted from the USMARC version. A new manual, the ***Guide to Indexing and Cataloging*** *with the Art and Architecture Thesaurus*, accompanies all of the above mentioned formats of the *AAT*. *(For more information on the second edition, see the insert in this newsletter.)*

### Important Changes

Among the significant changes and additions to the thesaurus are inclusion of conservation terminology, an important expansion to the form and genre terminology in the **Information Forms** hierarchy (formerly **Document Types**), and numerous new hierarchies in the **Objects Facet** that will be of great interest to the museum and visual resources communities. The second edition will be the first "complete" *AAT* in the sense that hierarchies have been developed for those areas that comprise the original scope of the thesaurus.

Of course, work on the *AAT* will not cease with the publication of the second edition. The thesaurus will continue to grow and evolve to reflect additions to the current vocabulary, shifts in terminology used in the field, and

*Complete AAT*
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Welcome to ***User Friendly***, a quarterly publication of the **AAT User Services Department**. As the new manager of the department and editor of this newsletter, I see this publication as a key component in our user services program.

***User Friendly*** will be a way for us to provide you with up-to-date information about the *AAT*, its applications, new terminology, and upcoming workshops and events. But that is only half the story. We want to hear from **you**, the *AAT* users, and we have built in several ways to encourage your participation.

First, I invite you to contribute to the guest column, **Where It's *AAT***. I anticipate being overwhelmed with submissions from users telling us how they use the *AAT* in 250 words or less. Second, each issue will include the **User's Forum**, a column devoted to your queries, comments, opinions, advice, etc. Here is your opportunity to ask *AAT* editors why they selected a certain term, comment on the issue of using multiple thesauri, or ask a technical question about *AAT:ART* software.

I truly look forward to hearing from you as well as meeting many of you personally at the upcoming conferences listed in the **Calendar**. You can get in touch with me by phone, fax, or e-mail *(see **Who Do You Call?**)*.

*Elisa Lanzi, User Services Manager*

# From The Director's Desk

The *AAT* has had a user services staff since 1984 – six years before the publication of the first edition in 1990! This shows the importance we have always placed on making sure that the *AAT* meets the needs of the diverse indexers and catalogers who recognize the need for a controlled vocabulary in archival, bibliographic, museum, and visual resources databases. In 1984 we began distributing printouts of the first drafts of developing hierarchies, knowing publication was years away but also being quite aware of the fact that users inputting records into databases could not wait for the finished product.

The early user services staff began to develop workshops and other modes of presenting the *AAT* and how to apply it. Most of these were given at annual conferences of the societies whose members would profit from a tool like the *AAT*. In the three years since the first edition of the *AAT* was published, however, we are gaining a new perspective on who *AAT* users are and what they need in the way of assistance with applying *AAT* terms in their databases.

Training in the use of the *AAT* will be focused more fully on the needs of special interest groups such as museum staff, archivists, visual resources curators, and librarians, in regional and individual institutional settings. New training materials, spearheaded by the publication of the *Guide to Indexing and Cataloging with the Art and Architecture Thesaurus*, will emphasize self-training and provide practical methods of subject analysis and indexing.

To implement this program the *AAT* staff now includes a User Services Manager, Elisa Lanzi, who joined us in February. Her department is responsible for training, public relations, and promotion of the *AAT*, including the production of the *AAT Bulletin* and this newsletter. Elisa has the advantage of having worked in three relevant user communities: museums, libraries, and indexing. Her experience in the nonprofit sector has been enhanced by her work in publishing, where she acquired a background in marketing and customer relations. Joining Elisa as Instructional Services Coordinator is Susanne Warren, who will be responsibile for planning and carrying out workshops. A second Instructional Services Coordinator is being sought to work with the *AAT*'s international users.

With this first issue of an *AAT* newsletter for users we urge you to take advantage of the avenues of assistance available through the *AAT* User Services Department. We welcome your participation.

Toni Petersen, *Director*

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*View of AAT offices in Williamstown.*



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*Complete AAT*
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changes in language generally. Users are encouraged to participate in this ongoing process of updating by submitting candidate terms. In addition to maintaining the vocabulary, the editorial staff, in response to user requests, will continue to add scope notes, related terms, and British English equivalents to those sections of the thesaurus which were developed before these were adopted as regular features.

One of the most exciting developments connected with the second edition is the publication of the *Guide to Indexing and Cataloging with the Art and Architecture Thesaurus* mentioned above. This manual was developed in response to repeated requests from *AAT* user groups for guidance in using the *AAT* for the cataloging and description of text, images, and objects. The *Guide* will contain four special sections, developed with significant input from the field, addressing the specific cataloging and indexing needs of archives and special collections, museums, visual resources collections, and libraries. These special sections will be accompanied by "real life" cataloging records from institutions using *AAT* terminology. We anticipate that the *Guide*, which will be included with all editions of the *AAT* or can be purchased separately, will be of great use to our various user communities.

# *Where It's AAT*

## Teaching Thesaurus Construction Using the *AAT*

by Katherine W. McCain
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*Author Katherine W. McCain*

As part of my teaching portfolio in the Master of Science program of the College of Information Studies at Drexel University, I offer a course called "Abstracting and Indexing" every fall term. We are on a 10 week quarter system, and it is a *very* fast track!! In the 10 weeks I introduce the students to the central issues in subject access system design, the crafting of informative and indicative abstracts, the principles of indexing for information retrieval and, of course, the basics of thesaurus construction. The *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* is the centerpiece of my unit on thesaurus building and one of the main examples offered to the students as guides to development of their own "mini-thesauri." This last assignment requires each student to chose a topic of interest (preferably a hobby, work activity, or the like) and build part of a thesaurus for that topic. At least two (preferably three) facets are required, as well as sufficient hierarchical depth, associative relationships, and entry terms to demonstrate basic competence. Both alphabetical and hierarchical access must be provided; students use various "standard" models, including the more or less "standard" thesauri used by ERIC and INSPEC, the NASA Thesaurus (with its combined hierarchical and alphabetical displays), and (of course) the *AAT* itself. The average assignment contains about 40-50 terms (including preferred and entry terms).

I first encountered the *AAT* in a talk given by Toni Petersen at the national ASIS meeting in 1988. I was immediately enthralled by the scope and structure of the thesaurus and its potential use in teaching. I have always stressed the importance of faceted subject analysis as the most natural way to go about developing subject access vocabularies. Elizabeth Orne's short work on designing thesauri for museum collections and Lancaster's writing on the development of controlled vocabularies were already part of my course readings. What we lacked

*Where It's AAT*
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# Candidate Term Report

The publication of the second edition has meant that for the past year or so, the editorial staff has been devoting its time to completing the originally planned-for hierarchies. The result has been that they have had little time to work on individual candidate terms submitted by users. Now that their editorial deadline has passed, they are able to turn their attention to the important task of processing the backlog. We expect to reinstate our schedule of a three-to-four-week turnaround time for the candidate term process. We encourage you to keep sending in those terms and lists – it's your opportunity to help us continue to make the *AAT* better and better.

In each issue we will publish a selection of recently accepted candidate terms in order to illustrate the diversity of the language that continues to be incorporated within the *AAT*'s established structure.*

## Selection of Candidate Terms Accepted June 1 – August 1, 1993

**offsets**
*Conditions and Effects Hierarchy (DE)*
*Scope Note:* Use for images or marks that result from an unintentional transfer of ink or other medium. For images intentionally transferred from a print or drawing to another sheet of paper, use "counterproofs."

**social movements**
*Associated Concepts Hierarchy (BM)*
*Scope Note:* Collective action undertaken by people who may or may not be formally organized, for the purpose of promoting or resisting an aspect of social change within a society.

**history of medicine**
*Disciplines Hierarchy (KD)*
*Scope Note:* Study of medical concepts and practice throughout human history in a global, social, cultural, and scientific context including theories, diseases, health care, individual practitioners, special branches of medicine, and medical professional such as nursing.

**models**
*Associated Concepts Hierarchy (BM)*
*Scope Note:* Something that serves as an ideal, a pattern to follow or copy, or source of inspiration to a creator.

**world wars**
*Events Hierarchy (KM)*
*Scope Note:* Wars that involve most of the leading political and military powers of the world, or most of the earth's territory.

## F1 Help!

Our editors are a diligent lot and they work very hard researching candidate terms submitted by our users. On occasion, however, even the most thorough search of available sources fails to uncover sufficient literary warrant for a term, and it must be returned to the submitter with a note to that effect. However, we are not going to let the matter rest there, so we now turn to you for help. If you know of additional authoritative sources for the following terms, please play editor for a few minutes and fax, phone, snail-mail, or e-mail us your information. It will be greatly appreciated.

**self-taught**
Warrant was found in general sources such as dictionaries, but not in works dealing with education per se. We need more authoritative confirmation that this term is considered to be a distinct educational methodology.

**despotates**
This term was only found in various editions of Webster. Additional references as needed to back up this single source.

**armories**
Although the term was found in several dictionaries, our consultants in heraldry and in books do not use it because it is dated, stylized, and not common. They did not have a genre term for these books of coats of arms.

**acoustic vases**
Reference to acoustic vases is found in Vitrivius (Book V, chapter V) where these vessels were used to amplify sound in theaters. Additional warrant needed from authoritative sources.

**arrowhead darts**
No warrant found.

**Please note that terms published in this column will not appear in the second edition, but in future supplements.*

# *For Your Information*

## Call for Papers

- The *AAT Bulletin*, an annual publication devoted to scholarly articles on all aspects of the *AAT*, including its application and research potential seeks papers and proposals for papers for publication. The deadline for submissions for the 1994 issue is **October 29, 1993**. Please contact Elisa Lanzi, User Services Manager.
- *Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation* will publish a special theme issue to coincide with the publication of the *AAT Second Edition*. The issue will deal with aspects of language in relation to the description of indexing of art objects and/or visual depictions of objects. Alfred Willis, Architecture Librarian at Kent State University is the guest editor for this issue, which will appear in early 1994.

## Windows and *AAT:ART*? Yes, it can be done!

If you are interested in using *AAT:ART*, version 1.0 in Windows™, a set of simple instructions is available. Although *AAT:ART* is *not* a Windows program, it can be used in that environment. Call Technical Support Staff at **(310) 451-6390**.

## Where Can I Find Those Candidate Term Forms?

- *AAT First Edition* (1990), volume 1, p. 49, Appendix B.
- *AAT Supplement I* (1992), p. 219.
- *AAT:ART, Version 1.0, AAT User's Guide to the AAT* (black manual), p. 45, Appendix B.
- Phone, fax, snail-mail, e-mail the **AAT User Services Department**.

*AAT Director Toni Petersen (center) with Instructional Services Coordinator Susanne Warren (left) and User Services Manager Elisa Lanzi (right).*

# *AAT* Users Profiled In Recent Survey

The *AAT* User Survey was planned and sponsored by the *AAT* Advisory Committee of the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) and the *AAT*. ARLIS/NA contributed a research grant that covered partial funding for production and mailing of the survey. It was sent in the fall of 1992 to 4,500 institutions including: archives, libraries, museums, visual resources collections, indexing services, bibliographic utilities, and encyclopedias, dictionaries, and inventories. The mailing list was compiled from lists of national organizations representing the above-mentioned fields of interest, as well as the *AAT*'s in-house list.

The survey not only provided the User Services Department with valuable information on our user community but also served as the basis for two projects. First, it supplies us with a core group of names and institutions for the *AAT* in-house user database. If you received this newsletter, you are a part of that database. You will continue to receive regular communications from the *AAT* including this newsletter, the *AAT Bulletin*, and update information on the thesaurus. The survey will

*Survey*
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also be used to construct a directory of *AAT* users to be published and distributed by ARLIS/NA. This directory will allow users to network with each other and to share information.

The following is a short summary of the survey responses. A total of just over 400 (8%) surveys were returned. Four distinct user groups were confirmed: libraries, visual resources collections, archives, and museums. Most survey respondents represented four general collection types: fine arts/history, i.e., archives (59.3%), architecture (43.7%), decorative arts (42.9%), and material culture (26.8%). 80% were using automated cataloging or collections management systems. 49.4% are MARC-compatible, with 39.5% actually cataloging on MARC (26.1% USMARC and 12.7% USMARC/AMC).

More than half of the respondents (56.3%) own the *AAT* print edition (1990), yet only 39% said they were using it. Why aren't they using it? A total of 15.1% are using another vocabulary; 11.9% said the *AAT* was too expensive. 8.9% said they don't know how to use the *AAT*. In the "other reasons" category, 18 respondents (14.4%) said they will use the *AAT* or consider using it in the future.

Not surprisingly, of those that use the *AAT*, 42.7% are using the 1990 print edition and 6% access it through RLIN. When asked which cataloging utilities are used, 21.3% reported OCLC and 13.2% RLIN. Respondents overwhelmingly use LCSH (50.1%) or (32%) for their terminology and a sizable 39.1% keep an in-house authority list.

A total of 28.3% indicated they had received training in the use of the *AAT*. Others were self-taught, mostly through the *AAT Guide to Use* (included as part of the front matter of the first edition) and articles from the professional literature. A total of 77.1% indicated they would like to be notified of training opportunities. When asked which training format is most appealing, local workshops and self-study manuals were most frequently cited, followed by written materials and demo disks.

*. . . 77.1% indicated they would like to be notified of training opportunities.*

What do people want from the *AAT* in the future? Of the already published hierarchies, respondents would especially like to see **Styles and Periods** (13%) and **Document Types** (10.4%) developed in greater depth and more specificity. Respondents anticipate using most the following new hierarchies to be published in the second edition: **Visual Works** (70.7%), **Information Forms** (59.2%), **Costume** (46.2%), and **Conservation** (15.6%).

The *AAT* User Survey 1992 confirms many assumptions about users as well as reveals new information that can be used in long-range planning. Existing plans for the *AAT* will respond directly to issues brought out in this survey: for example, the *AAT*:USMARC edition will be applicable to the almost 50% who are MARC-compatible.

Many of the requested content enhancements have been addressed in the forthcoming second edition, including the expansion and refinement of both the **Styles and Periods** and **Document Types** (now **Information Forms**) hierarchies. As requested, more scope notes are included in this edition.

The User Services Department has responded to the shift in emphasis from editorial production to *AAT* implementation. The addition of a User Services Manager, the publication of this newsletter, and the *Guide to Indexing and Cataloging with the Art and Architecture Thesaurus* are all part of an expanded user support program. The newsletter also includes a column on candidate terms.

We thank all those who responded to the survey and hope that you will be repaid by receiving more communications from the *AAT* in the future. If you did not send in a survey form and would like to be on the *AAT* mailing list, please contact Elisa Lanzi, User Services Manager.

# *Where It's AAT*

## Teaching Thesaurus Construction Using the *AAT*

by Katherine W. McCain

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was an even partially worked out *accessible* thesaurus – one that the students were comfortable with (being mostly humanities and social science majors), that demonstrated true faceted structure, and that was being *used*.

Toni was kind enough to send me some of the promotional material describing the thesaurus – the *AAT Bulletin*, Synopsis, and overview publications – and permitted me to distribute the material to my students. Since then, I have used both the published descriptive materials and (since 1990) selected pages from the *AAT* first edition itself as required study sources.

I value the *AAT* as a teaching tool for several reasons:

- The subject matter is, at least in part, accessible for all of my students. "Science fear" is as prevalent as "math fear" among MS students, and with the *AAT* the vocabulary doesn't get in the way as much as in a science/engineering thesaurus. They can focus on the structure of the term hierarchies and see how the system works.
- The term sources are well documented. Students can see how standard works feed into the development of a thesaurus vocabulary and feel more comfortable in working on their own assignments using texts and handbooks.
- The facets and hierarchies help the students understand the nature of faceted subject analysis. They include both the "generic" facet expected in *any* well-constructed thesaurus (Agents/People, Organizations; Materials; Activities/Processes, Functions) and those more specific to the knowledge domain (Physical Attributes/Design Attributes, Design Elements), which gives the students guidance in identifying similar generic and specific term families in their own topic.
- The hierarchial term structure is, simply, beautiful. (I know this sounds crazy, but I really feel that the *AAT* is truly elegant in the way that a mathematics proof can be elegant.)
- A number of important solutions to term development problems are dealt with clearly – in particular the use of guide terms as "place markers" in the hierarchy for indexing terms in the branch below and the very clear examples of "independent parallel" subfaceting (such as housing by form, by function, by occupants). (This inspired one student doing a thesaurus on baseball to include the following – pitchers [playing position] "by strategic role" (starter, long reliever, short reliever), "by throwing arm" (right-hander, left-hander), "by signature pitch" (knuckle-baller)...etc.)

A few of the more interesting and successful topics for thesauri in my class are: Darkroom Photography, Jazz, Rabbitry, Glass Bottles (for collectors), Baseball, Historical (precomputerized) Mapmaking, and Sailing. Space limitations preclude a more detailed description of the thesaurus construction assignment and the course in general, but I would be happy to hear from any readers with questions, comments, or suggestions.

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# Calendar

*September 1–5, 1993*
**Society of American Archivists (SAA) Annual Conference,** *New Orleans, LA*
Elisa Lanzi and Susanne Warren will lead the *AAT* Roundtable meeting on Saturday, September 4, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. They will also be available for "AAT Office Hours" in the exhibit area on Thursday, September 2, from 12:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

*September 10–16, 1993*
**CIDOC Annual Conference,** *Ljubljana, Slovenia*
Toni Petersen will present a paper and give a workshop, "Terminology Control: Thesaurus Construction and Use."

*October 22–28, 1993*
**American Society for Information Science (ASIS) Annual Meeting,** *Columbus, Ohio*
Session: "Retrofitting the Thesaurus: New Models for Old Vocabularies." The moderator will be Matthew Moore, ATLA, and speakers include: Martha Evens, Illinois Institute of Technology; Raya Fidel, University of Washington; and Toni Petersen, AAT.

*November 3–6, 1993*
**Museum Computer Network (MCN) Annual Conference,** *Seattle, WA*
Workshop: "The *AAT*: A Practical Tool for Collections Management" presented by Elisa Lanzi and Susanne Warren, AAT. An intermediate level hands-on workshop intended for museum registrars, curators, and collections managers with some knowledge of information standards, authority control, and collections automation. Registration limited to 30. Please contact MCN for more information.
Session: "Perspectives on Vocabulary Control: Current Practice" will explore how different types of tools, specifically *Nomenclature*, the *AAT*, and *ICONCLASS* have been employed to provide access to objects and images in museums. Moderator will be Patricia Barnett, Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art; speakers include: Marsha Bray, Missouri Historical Society; Michael J. Fox, Minnesota Historical Society; and Helene Roberts, Fogg Art Museum Library, Harvard University.

*February 1994*
**Publication of the *Art and Architecture Thesaurus, Second Edition*!**

*February 10–17, 1994*
**Art Libraries Society/North America (ARLIS/NA) Annual Conference,** *Providence, RI*
A reception will be held to celebrate the publication of the second edition. Session "New Avenues of Access in the Online Catalog: Consensus, Collaboration, Commingling" will examine the steps that have been taken by the *AAT* and by LC to provide consistent vocabulary for the indexing of art and architecture materials. Speakers will be Toni Petersen, AAT; Steven Blake Shubert, Royal Ontario Museum; and Mark Ziomek, Cataloging Policy and Support Office, Library of Congress.

*February 16–19, 1994*
**Visual Resources Association Annual Conference,** *New York, NY*
Session: "Words and Pictures: Linguistic Issues in Image Access" moderated by Alfred Willis.

*And coming in 1994 . . .*
Regional workshops planned for Washington, D.C.,and Southern California.

Editor's Note: *If you know of any future event at which the AAT will be discussed or where topics related to use of the AAT will be featured, please let us know.*